SERVING THE TOTAL FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

MAY 20, 1992

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Ivy-winning Four Seasons Chicago features an international *plat du jour*

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R&I SALUTES

The 1992 Ivy Winners

Seven models of restaurant excellence

VOL. 102, NO. 12

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1992 IVY WINNERS

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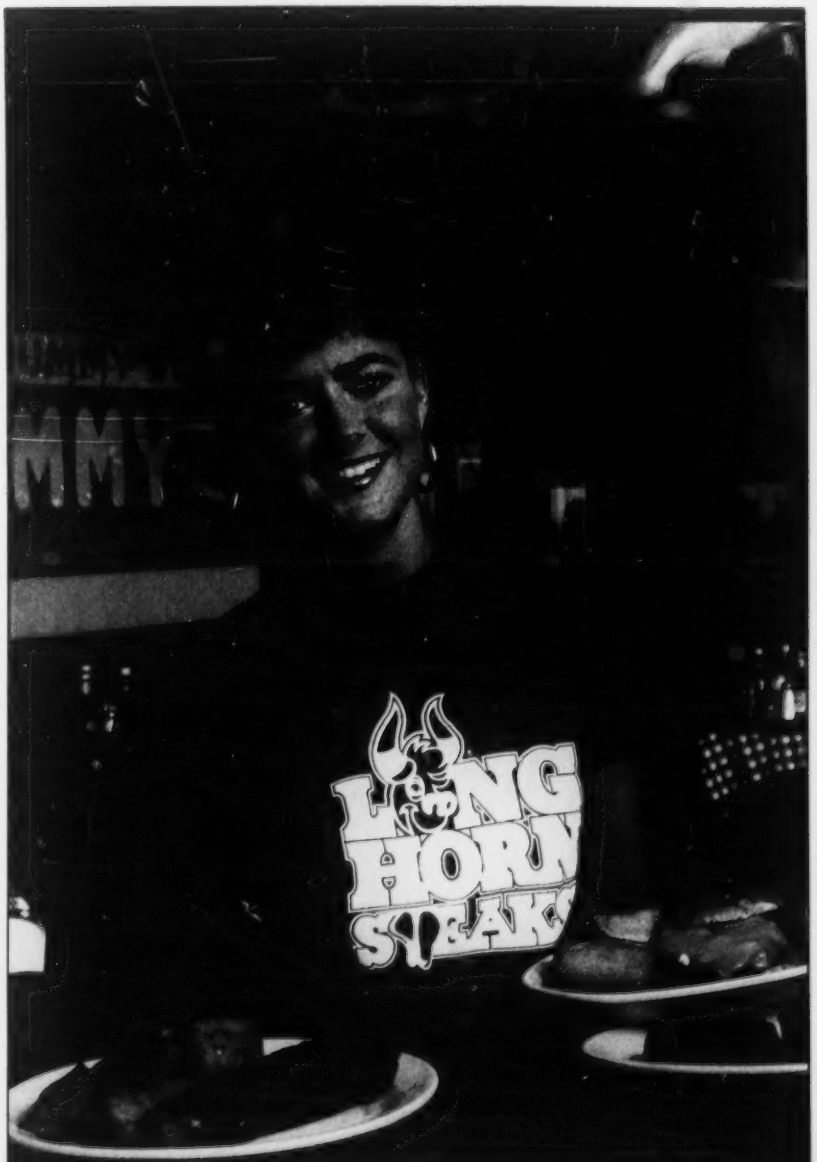


Longhorn Steaks' restaurants offer only 12 entrees at lunch—nine of which are steak. Story, page 12.

SMILE AND SAY 'CHEESECAKE'

When asked to name the dessert they would pick to top off a perfect meal, 15% of customers chose cheesecake.

Cheesecake	15%
Pie (misc.)	15
Ice cream	14
Chocolate cake	8
Apple pie	7
Fruit	6
Lemon/lemon meringue pie	3
Jello	3
Other	20
No dessert	6
No opinion	3

Source: The Gallup Organization, November 1991

Max & Erma's To Spring New Menu for Summer

Max & Erma's, the Columbus, Ohio-based casual-dining chain, says its summer menu is set to splash down on Memorial Day.

The chain has chosen "postcards" as the motif for the new menu, says Carolyn Cullers-Delp, director of field marketing and promotions. Menu items will sport city names and be accompanied by postcards from those destinations.

A Mexican-style gazpacho kicks off the menu, while Key lime pie and cheesecake served with fresh strawberries give it a sweet finish. Notable on the entree list is a Buffalo Chicken Sandwich, which is a boneless, skinless chicken breast in a traditional Buffalo wings-style hot sauce, served on a grilled poppy-seed bun with lettuce.

T.G.I. Friday's new menu additions debuted in April.

Blue-cheese dressing, celery sticks and fries come on the side. Other entrees are a shrimp and avocado salad, a tuna salad fruit plate, and a ham and Swiss croissant.

The summer menu also features three beverages: fresh-squeezed lemonade; the same lemonade with a top-shelf citrus vodka; and a root-beer float, made with a premium brand of regular or diet root beer and vanilla ice cream served in a frosty mug that guests can keep.

At press time, the chain had not set prices for the new menu, Cullers-Delp said. **—Rajan Chaudhry**

Chains Introduce Cool Summer Specials

Bresler's Ice Cream & Yogurt says it has developed a special frozen-yogurt flavor for summer: cotton candy. The limited-time product will hit stores June 1. The chain also reports that its newest ice-cream flavor, cookie dough, is running third behind perennial favorites vanilla and chocolate in sales. . . . **Subway** plans a Picnic Sack promotion to run from June to August. The special will feature four 6-inch subs plus a 44-ounce plastic canteen-style soft-drink container, filled with a beverage, for a recommended price of $9.99. Local markets have the option of offering 49-cent refills or free refills. In other news from Subway: The rollout of its 4-inch round sandwiches seems imminent. The product has been especially popular with kids, teens and women. **—R.C.**

Friday's Paints Fresh Image for New Items

Three healthful main dishes and one sinful dessert debuted at Dallas-based T.G.I. Friday's late in April.

New to the casual-theme chain's permanent menu are:

□ Pacific Coast Tuna: A julienne of roughly nine seasonal vegetables, steamed and topped with sliced charbroiled tuna. Friday's serves the dish with a light Oriental vinaigrette for dipping.

□ Barbecue Chicken Pattie Melt: Grilled breast of chicken served on grilled thick-crust rye bread with sautéed onion and melted Cheddar. The melt comes with house-made barbecue sauce, which requires four to six hours of preparation, and a side of fries.

□ Blackened Tuna Caesar Salad: Slices of blackened tuna steak atop hearts of romaine lettuce. Garnished with tomatoes and black olives, it comes with garlic bread.

□ Chocolate Malt Turtle: Chocolate malt cake served warm in a goblet and topped with hot caramel, pecans and vanilla ice cream.

Prices for the new entrees range from $5 to $6; the dessert runs about $3.50, says a Friday's spokeswoman.

Radio advertising is supporting the introduction nationwide, while TV spots have aired in about seven markets. In-store marketing, in the form of place mats and posters, stresses wholesomeness by using drawings of fresh ingredients for each dish. **—R.C.**

DISNEY SHUTTERS MICKEY'S KITCHEN

Call them goofy, but executives at Walt Disney Co. have closed the two Mickey's Kitchen restaurants outside Los Angeles and Chicago.

The units, the first of which opened two years ago, were operating close to break-even, says Disney spokesman Chuck Champlin. But the company wanted to refocus its resources on expanding its more successful Disney Stores retail chain, both at home and abroad.

Mickey's Kitchen's menu leaned toward healthful fast-food fare and included a meatless burger, turkey dogs and french fries shaped like Mickey Mouse. Most items were priced under $3.

Disney currently has no plans for new food-service ventures outside of its theme parks, Champlin says. Mickey could not be reached for comment. —R.C.

Restaurants Unlimited To Open Palisade

Restaurants Unlimited, Seattle, says it will open Palisade, its biggest restaurant yet, in its hometown in June.

Overlooking the newly built Elliot Bay Marina on Puget Sound, the 12,000-square-foot upscale seafood restaurant will offer a view of 1,200 boat slips, the Olympic Mountains and Mount Ranier. Indoors, customers will cross a bridge over a 1,000-square-foot saltwater fish pond to their tables in a 240-seat dining room.

The restaurant will rely on a wood-burning rotisserie and a wood-burning stove to prepare most main dishes.

The menu will showcase salmon, prepared any of five ways: on the rotisserie, on a searing grill, on a broiler, in the wood oven, and on a cedar plank—a local Native American treatment that involves placing cured salmon and vegetables in individual portions on metal-reinforced cedar and baking it. "The wood releases some of its flavorful oils into the salmon," says Senior Executive Chef John Howie. Prices for the salmon dishes will range from $16.95 to $18.95.

The company projects an average per-person tab of $25 to $29 for Palisade.

The $4 million project also includes a smaller, dock-level restaurant called Maggie Bluffs View Cafe, which will serve tavern fare such as pizza and fish and chips.

Restaurants Unlimited operates 21 full-service restaurants and owns the Cinnabon bakery chain. —B.M.

Bresler's Unveils New Cafe Concept

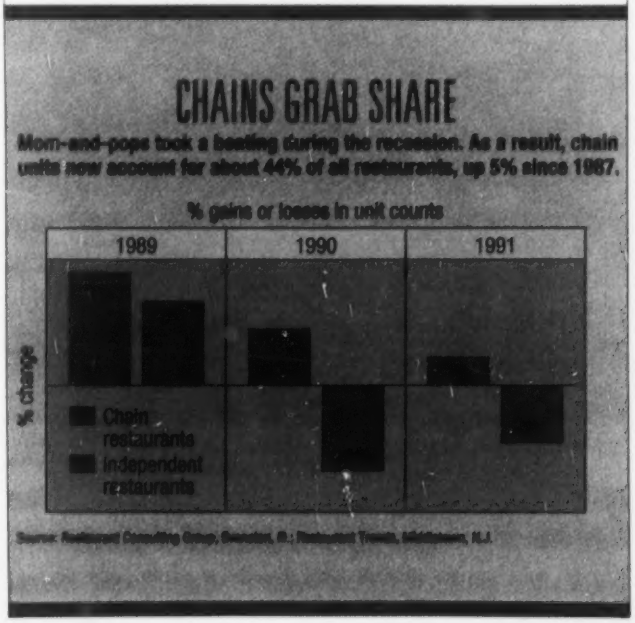
Bresler's, the Des Plaines, Ill.-based franchisor of ice-cream shops, has launched a new cafe concept in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

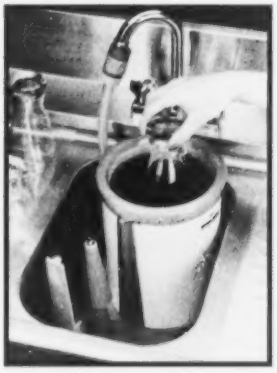
Bresler's franchisee A&D General Corp. purchased the leases of 12 TCBY stores out of bankruptcy and began converting the units to Cafe Bresler's in March, the company says. All but one of the sites are located in strip malls.

In addition to Bresler's ice cream and yogurt products, which sell best during evenings and weekends, the cafes cater to lunch crowds with five deli-style sandwiches, about eight salads, soup, chili, several varieties of quiche and focaccia, a pizza-style Italian bread. Both the quiche and the focaccia come with choice of soup or side salad.

Entrees are $4.25. For the stores currently open, the average check per person is running about $5, says President David Lasky.

Although the new cafe concept is designed for counter service, one unit, in Barrington, Ill., offers table service. —R.C.


CHAINS GRAB SHARE
Mom-and-pops took a beating during the recession. As a result, chain units now account for about 44% of all restaurants, up 5% since 1987.
% gains or losses in unit counts
1989
1990
1991
% change
Chain restaurants
Independent restaurants



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